

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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FM USINT CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4016

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EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS EG

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION IN EGYPT

FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM USINT SOURCE IS CURRENT AS OF
ABOUT 2200 LOCAL TIME OCTOBER 14.

1. EGYPTIAN FRONT: EGYPTIAN ARMORED OFFENSIVE OCTOBER 14
WAS LAUNCHED PRIMARILY IN ORDER TO RELIEVE PRESSURE FROM
SYRIANS, BUT HAD SECONDARY PURPOSE OF ADVANCE TOWARD THREE
PRINCIPAL PASSES IN THE SINAI HILLS. EGYPTIAN FORCES
ADVANCED VERY LITTLE IN MOST SECTORS, IF AT ALL. AT SOME
POINTS PENETRATION WAS THREE KILOMETERS, AT OTHER POINTS
NOTHING. ISRAELIS CONTINUED TO HAMMER AWAY AT FRONT WITH
VERY AGGRESSIVE AIRCRAFT ATTACKS. EGYPTIANS STATE 76 EGYPTIAN
TANKS WERE DESTROYED DURING COURSE OF DAY'S BATTLE. DESPITE
THIS LOSS, SOURCE STATES EGYPTIAN FORCES CAPTURED TWO AIRSTRIPS
IN SINAI: BALOUZA IN NORTHERN SECTOR, AND ONE OTHER (UNNAMED)
IN SOUTH. SOURCE STATES THAT ISRAELI ARMORED BRIGADE (ARABIC:
"LIWA") WAS TRAPPED LATE LAST NIGHT IN CENTRAL SECTOR
AND WAS HAVING HEAVY FIRE DIRECTED ON IT. EGYPTIANS STATE
FRONT LINE IS SLIGHTLY BOWED AND RUNS FROM POINT 23 KILOMETERS
EAST OF CANAL ON NORTH TO 20 KILOMETERS EAST IN CENTRAL
SECTOR TO 23 KILOMETERS EAST OF CANAL OPPOSITE PORT TAWFIK.
DURING COURSE OF FIGHTING ON OCTOBER 13 AND 14 EGYPTIANS
SUFFERED 450-500 KILLED WITH 600 WOUNDED.

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2. AIR ACTION. SOURCE STATES EGYPTIAN-PILOTED MIRAGES SENT
FROM LIBYA EARLIER IN YEAR SAW ACTION OVER SINAI. SOURCE
STATES THAT LIBYAN MIRAGES IN EGYPT NOW TOTAL 36. SOURCE
ADDS THAT SADAT CAME IN FOR SOME CRITICISM AT MEETING WITH

MILITARY COMMANDERS OCTOBER 14 BECAUSE ARAB CLAIMS OF ISRAELI AIR LOSSES HAD EXCEEDED TOTAL NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT IN ISRAELI INVENTORY. SADAT STATED HE HAD TRIED TO STOP SYRIANS FROM WILDLY EXAGGERATING CLAIMS OF ISRAELI AIRCRAFT LOST. HE ASSURED THEM THAT BEST EGYPTIAN INTELLIGENCE CARRIED 140-150 ISRAELI AIRCRAFT DESTROYED; 80 OF THESE HAD BEEN BROUGHT DOWN BY EGYPTIAN FORCES.

3. OTHER ACTION. ON OCTOBER 13, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, ANOTHER COMMANDO ATTEMPT WAS MADE AT SHARM EL-SHEIKH; IT FAILED AND 35 MEN DISPATCHED TO SHARM IN BOAT WERE ALL KILLED. SOURCE HAD NO INFORMATION ON SYRIAN FRONT EXCEPT TO SAY THAT SITUATION WAS VERY BAD. GOE HOPED THAT IRAQI, SAUDI AND JORDANIAN FORCES WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTAIN ISRAELI ADVANCES.

4. PLANS. SADAT TOLD MILITARY COMMANDERS YESTERDAY THAT HE EXPECTS GOLDA MEIR TO ASK FOR CEASEFIRE SHORTLY. HE STATED EGYPT WOULD ACCEPT ON CONDITION THAT ISRAELIS ACCEPT PRINCIPLE OF WITHDRAWAL TO 1967 BORDERS. NEGOTIATIONS WOULD THEN PROCEED TOWARD FINAL SETTLEMENT OF ME CRISIS. HE SAID HE WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, WHICH SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE UNITED NATIONS.

5. SOURCE STATES THAT ON OCTOBER 13, ISAM SADAT, PRESIDENT'S 26-YEAR-OLD HALF-BROTHER, DID NOT RETURN FROM EAF MISSION OVER SINAI. IT IS PRESUMED HE IS DEAD. (CAN DEPARTMENT CONFIRM EXISTENCE OF ISAM SADAT?)
SMITH

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